

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSC-05 CPR-01 SS-15 CCO-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 /034 R

DRAFTED BY TEXT RECEIVED FROM WHITE HOUSE

APPROVED BY EUR - JAARMITAGE

S/CPR - HECATTO

D - MSPENDLETON

S/S - JMEALUM

S - JCOVEY

EUR/WE - HGMOEN

S/S:JLHOGANSON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 124718 TOSEC 020087

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, IT

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM - CONVEYING US ACCEPTANCE OF  
ITALIAN AMBASSADOR ROBERTO GAJA (S/S NO.7510902)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM ARMITAGE

### 1. THE PROBLEM.

WE ARE FORWARDING TO THE PRESIDENT, TOGETHER WITH THE  
DEPARTMENT'S FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION, THE ITALIAN GOVERN-  
MENT'S REQUEST OF MAY 26 FOR AGREEMENT FOR AMBASSADOR  
ROBERTO GAJA, THE PRESENT SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE  
ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY, AS THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF  
ITALY TO THE UNITED STATES. GAJA WOULD SUCCEED RETIRING  
AMBASSADOR EGIDIO ORTONA. SINCE PRESIDENT FORD WILL VISIT  
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ROME ON JUNE 3, HE MAY WISH TO USE THAT OCCASION TO CONVEY  
PERSONALLY TO PRESIDENT LEONE US AGREEMENT TO AMBASSADOR  
GAJA.

2. BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS.

THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO ROME COINCIDES WITH AMBASSADOR ORTONA'S RETIREMENT AFTER 43 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF WHICH 25 YEARS WERE IN THE UNITED STATES -- THE LAST

EIGHT AS AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS PICKED ROBERTO GAJA -- ITALY'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS DIPLOMAT -- TO REPRESENT ITALY IN THE UNITED STATES. THUS, THE JUNE 3 VISIT TO ROME IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PRESIDENT, AT A SUITABLE OCCASION WHEN AMBASSADORS ORTONA AND GAJA ARE PRESENT, TO REGRET ORTONA'S DEPARTURE FROM WASHINGTON, CONVEY US APPROVAL OF GAJA PERSONALLY TO PRESIDENT LEONE, AND WELCOME GAJA AS THE NEXT ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES. THE PRESIDENT'S DIRECT AND PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE GAJA NOMINATION WOULD BE FULLY IN KEEPING WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO ROME.

3. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT PERSONAL GESTURE BY THE PRESIDENT IN THIS MATTER WOULD BE SEEN BY THE ITALIANS AS EVIDENCE OF THE HIGHEST LEVEL US GOVERNMENT INTEREST IN ITALY, AND WOULD BE EXTREMELY WELL RECEIVED AND APPRECIATED.

4. RECOMMENDATION.

THAT YOU APPROVE THE PRINCIPLE OF PRESIDENT PERSONALLY INFORMING ITALIANS DURING ROME VISIT OF HIS AGREEMENT TO APPOINTMENT OF GAJA AS ITALY'S AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON. MEANWHILE, FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF US APPROVAL OF THE REQUEST FOR AGREEMENT WOULD BE HANDLED ROUTINELY THROUGH NORMAL CHANNELS AFTER ROME VISIT.

APPROVE            DISAPPROVE

5. CLEARED: S/CPR (CATTO), D, S/S, S. INGERSOLL  
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## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 29 MAY 1975  
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**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** n/a  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 04 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <04 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <20 OCT 2003 by KelleyW0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**To:** SECRETARY  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006